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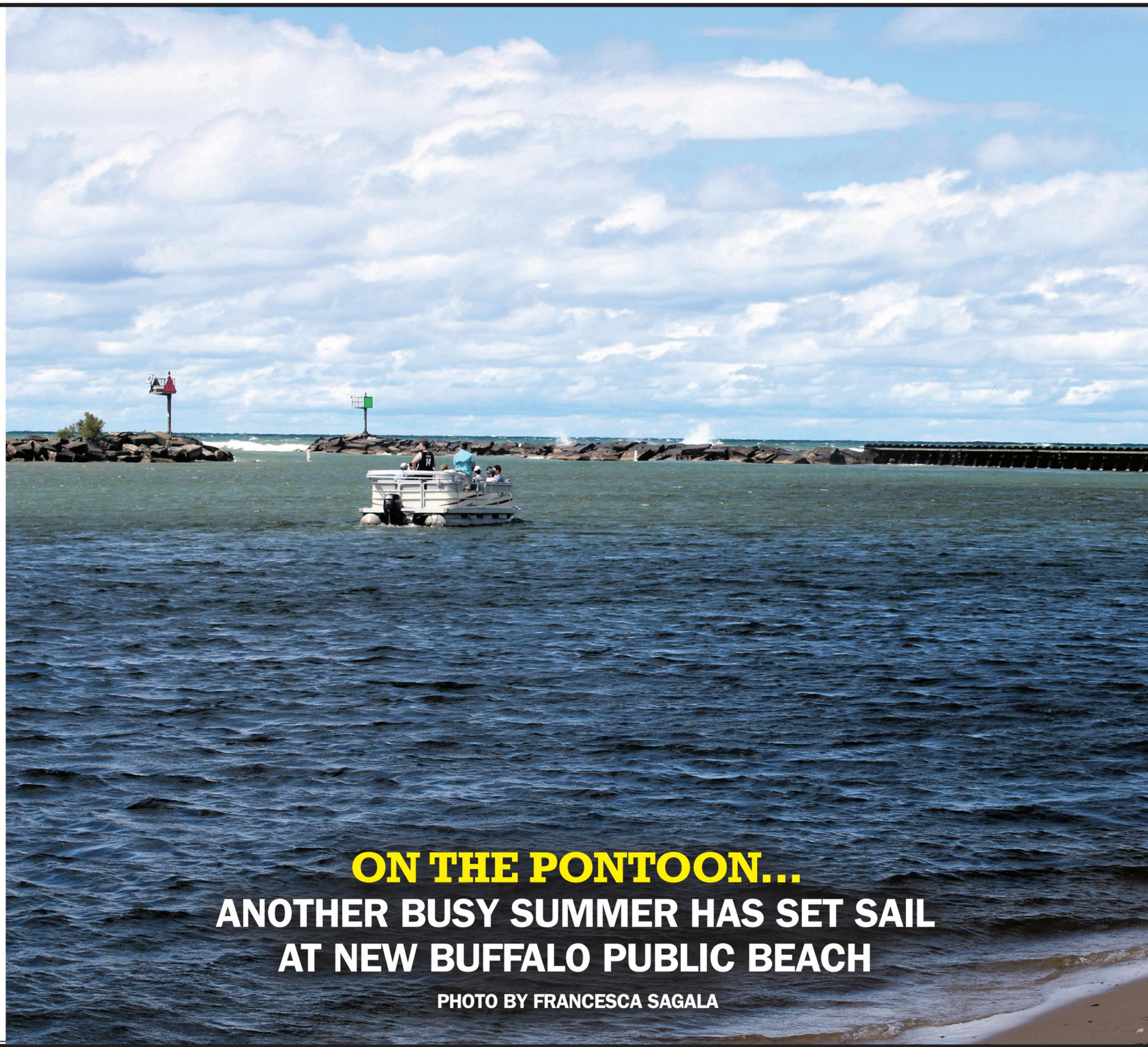

ON THE PONTOON...

ANOTHER BUSY SUMMER HAS SET SAIL AT NEW BUFFALO PUBLIC BEACH

PHOTO BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

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Arrests in spree of thefts at graves of veterans

BY STAN MADDUX

Arrests have been made in connection with a string of bronze name plates stolen from the gravesites of deceased veterans and sold for scrap in La Porte County.

Terry Wood, Jr., 53, and Breanna Puentez, 25, are charged in La Porte Circuit Court with Level 5 felony theft and Level 6 felony criminal mischief.

Originally, the markers on the back of headstones listing the names of veterans and information about their military service were reported stolen at cemeteries in Rolling Prairie and Union Mills.

More were discovered missing during the ongoing investigation at Carmel Cemetery near Westville, Pinola Cemetery along with Greenwood and St. Stanislaus cemeteries in Michigan City, according to La Porte County Police.

Police said it appears a pry bar was used to remove the name plates judging by scratch marks left on the headstones.

After help from the public was sought in late August to generate leads in the case, Dynamic Metal Recycling at Kingsbury Industrial Park notified the sheriff's office the following day about receiving what appeared to be the stolen grave markers, court documents revealed.

Police said the roughly two feet long by one foot wide markers had the names grinded off and the metal cut into pieces before sold for scrap.

According to court documents, investigators by piecing together the metal like a jaw saw puzzle determined 11 of the stolen grave markers were sold at the scrap yard in Kingsbury.

The business also provided detectives with three receipts from transactions with Wood over a near two-week period beginning Aug. 15.

There were at least four other stolen grave markers of veterans not yet recovered, police said.

Wood was arrested on Sept. 6 at his home in the 400 block of Andrew Avenue on La Porte's west side.

Puentez was taken into custody later that day at an undisclosed location, police said.

According to court documents, Wood confessed to the crimes and described Puentez as his girlfriend.

He also told police she was with him each time he stole the name plates and sold them for scrap.

Court documents also revealed that replacing each name plate would cost anywhere from $4,000 to $5,000.

Wood was still being held Monday in the La Porte County Jail on $15,000, according to jail records.

No bail was set for Puentez.

Court records show Puentez was out on a previous bond for still undecided possession of methamphetamine charges filed last year.

The fastest thing in the universe is thought.
— Dino N. Fatouros

City of New Buffalo hosting fall clean-up day

The City of New Buffalo and Lakeshore Recycling and Disposal will be conducting a fall clean-up Wednesday, Sept. 25.

This is a great opportunity to dispose of your household waste and bulk items.

Households should put no more than two items out by 7 a.m. on collection day. Items can be left out 24 hours before Sept. 25.

Accepted items include furniture (couches, chairs, dressers with drawers removed, etc.); small home fixtures (single bathroom vanity, toilet with tank separate, kitchen sink separate from countertops, etc.); doors (storm doors with glass taped, screen doors, closet doors); toys and bicycles; latex paint (must be dried up with lids off - use sawdust or kitty litter to dry paint); mattress wrapped in plastic; bagged and containerized municipal solid waste (household waste); bags and containers must weigh less than 50 pounds; fur kitchen trash bags (not to exceed 13- gallon bags) equivalent to one item; containers such as 18-gallon or less storage totes, with two totes being equivalent to one item and 96-gallon trash or recycling totes; each tote is equivalent to one item.

Unaccepted items re large plastic drums, concrete or any building/demolition/construction materials; remodeling debris; large household fixtures (bathtubs, showers, large glass panes, etc.); windows; large pieces of metal; yard waste; liquid waste or hazardous waste; tires, rims, car parts, motor oil, or solvents; non-latex paints, varnishes, or stains; batteries of any kind; medical waste and appliances.

There will be limit of two items per household. Bulk items must be placed at the street side for removal. Items not in the designated area will not be removed. Lakeshore is not allowed to unload trailers or vehicles.

For more information on hazardous waste, please visit the Berrien County website at www.berriencounty.org.

If you have any additional questions, please contact Lakeshore's office at 269-231-5623 or info@lakeshorerecycling.com. — STAFF REPORTS

Local Government Meetings

New Buffalo Times

Democracy Requires Transparency

CITY OF NEW BUFFALO
JOHN HUMPHREY, MAYOR
CITY COUNCIL
MARK ROBERTSON, ROGER LIJEWSKI, JOHN HUMPHREY, BRIAN FLANAGAN, VANCE PRICE
City Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:30PM
CITY OF NEW BUFFALO PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 5:30PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP BOARD
PETE RAHM, MICHELLE HEIT, MICHELLE HANNON, PATTY IAZZETTO, JACK ROGERS
Board meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 4PM
NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM
SHERIFF BERRIEN COUNTY
Sheriff, Chuck Heit
Undersheriff, Greg Sanders
NEW BUFFALO AREA RECREATIONAL AUTHORITY
Meets at 10AM on the 2nd Wednesday of every other month (odd) at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway New Buffalo
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS BOARD
LISA WERNER, JOHN HASKINS, DENISE CHURCHILL, BRADLEY BURNER, VANESSA THUN, STEPHEN DONNELLY, GREG VOSBERG
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP BOARD
DAVID BUNTE, PAULA DUDIAK, LIZ RETTIG, RICHARD SULLIVAN, BILL MARSKE
Chikaming Board meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM
CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
Meets on the 1st Wednesday of each month at 6:30PM
THREE OAKS
THREE OAKS TOWNSHIP BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7PM

VILLAGE OF THREE OAKS BOARD
Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7PM
GRAND BEACH
Meets on the 3rd Wednesday October thru March at 5PM EST
KIMBERLY WOLNIK, CLERK-TREASURER
HARRY WALDER BLAKE O'HALLORAN, JAMES BRACEWELL, PETER DOERR, EDWARD BRANDES
MICHIANA
VILLAGE OF MICHIANA COUNCIL
Meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at 1PM

Berrien County Health Department offering infant safe sleep tips during Baby Safety Month

The Berrien County Health Department is promoting infant safe sleep practices and resources for parents during Baby Safety Month.

Initiated in 1983, Baby Safety Month recognizes the key role parents and caregivers play in protecting babies and young children from preventable injuries and death.

In offering safe sleep tips, the Health Department uses the ABCs: The baby sleeps alone on its back and in a crib, portable play area or bassinet. Here are additional safe sleep tips for infants:

- Place the baby on their back, even if they can roll over.
- Keep the crib free of pillows, blankets, comforters, stuffed animals or other soft objects
- Keep the baby's face uncovered while sleeping and use a sleep sack instead of a blanket to keep them warm.
- Do not allow anyone to smoke around the baby
- Use a firm mattress with a tightly fitting sheet in the crib, portable play area or bassinet
- Do not let the baby sleep in an adult bed or on a couch or chair with anyone

"The Berrien County Health Department is partnering with families to help them prevent sleep-related deaths," said Miranda Bronicki Dopp, BCHD's family health program manager. "We want to make sure caregivers feel confident in their knowledge and make choices best for their family when it comes to safe sleep. We never want parents and caregivers to be left wishing they had known more or done something differently."

BCHD provides eligible households with a free portable crib through its Baby's Own Bed program. To find out whether you qualify, call 269-926-7121.

Learn more about infant safe sleep practices and additional resources for parents and caregivers on BCHD's website. Caregivers also are encouraged to visit the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services website for additional safe sleep steps. — STAFF REPORTS

Inquiry is fatal to certainty.
— Will Durant

TICKETS ON SALE FOR 'FUR BALL'

Michiana Humane Society's fall fundraiser, The Fur Ball, will be a country and western themed party that will benefit the Michiana Humane Society Friday, Oct. 4th.

With an open bar, wood-fired pizza and delicious appetizers, live music and dancing, an auction and raffle, the event promises to be a rootin' tootin' good time.

This year, MHS is bringing the party to Michigan City, as the Fur Ball will be held at the spectacular White Oak Farm Venue in The Poplar Barn. This event promises to be one of the most talked about in years, with 100% of the proceeds benefiting the roughly 1,000 animals that MHS will care for in 2024.

Live music will be provided by Jack Whittle and line dancing will be led by Sunset Coast Dancers. Guests should wear their favorite flannel, jeans, hat, boots and bling to join a line dance or two-step their way around the room.

Auction items include a two-night stay at The Vintage Inn B & B in South Haven plus a luxury private wineries tour; a Provence-inspire afternoon with chef Michael Faltum, French wines, games of "boules" and pleine air painting for 12; a private guided river kayaking adventure and a picnic lunch and before and dinner for eight after; dinner hosted by television chef Joey D. for six at the New Buffalo Yacht Club and sunset cruise; two nights at the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort and Spa on the lower Colorado River outside Austin, Texas and a Steelhead or Coho six-hour private fishing charter and Silver Beach Pizza lunch.

Tickets can be purchased at www.michianapets.org/furball. Tickets are limited. — STAFF REPORTS

Plans to build over 200 new homes leap first hurdle

BY STAN MADDUX

A proposal to build more than 200 new market priced homes is moving forward in Michigan City.

The city's Redevelopment Commission Monday night unanimously approved a memorandum of understanding with Sloane Homes of Highland Park, Illinois, and Redstone Homes in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

RDC Attorney Alan Sirinek said the tentative plans call for the construction of eight buildings containing 124 rental units along with 122 townhouse units available for purchase on Tryon Road on the city's far-east side.

Sirinek said there would also be 6,000 square feet of retail space to serve the needs of residents in the proposed development referred to as "Tryon Meadow Housing."

Officials seemed to more than welcome the proposal to help modernize the city's aging housing stock.

"There's no secret Michigan City needs housing. So, whenever a developer is proposing a housing development we kind of perk our ears up," he said.

Sirinek said the developers requested the MOU, saying it would help them purchase the property within the short deadline they're under to secure the land and obtain a lower interest rate on the financing.

The MOU also represents a commitment by the city to work with the developers over the next 45 days on an incentive package.

Skyler York, the city's director of Planning and Development, said the city is being asked to help pay for the expense of constructing roads and extending municipal water and sewer service to the site.

York said how much the city would contribute toward the very rough four million dollar estimated cost is among the details yet to be hammered out.

The cost of the new infrastructure would be paid for with tax money generated from the new homes increasing the assessed value of the undeveloped land.

York said the developers are still in the process of deciding the exact spot along Tryon Road to start constructing the homes.

"There's still a lot of open land over there that they're looking at," he said.

Mayor Angie Nelson Deuitch said she's in full support of the project.

"I think it's a wonderful way to not only improve our infrastructure but also to increase our housing stock," she said.

Officials also seemed impressed with how prepared and committed the developers seem to be about the project.

York said one of things the city would like is for some of the new construction to be workforce housing priced at what a good wage earner can afford.

"We've been working pretty diligently with this group. They're been pretty aggressive with respect to doing the things that we asked them to do," he said.

Deuitch also complimented the developers for having their "ducks in a row. Ready to go without asking for a whole lot," she said.

York said the developers have built thousands of new homes primarily from the Chicago area through northwest Indiana and into southwest Michigan.

He said the MOU is an agreement for the city and developers to partner together while moving ahead in the process toward final approval without guarantees or threat of penalty.

"We're going to basically hold hands and move forward," York said.

The cost of rent and sale price are other specifics not decided yet because of the plans being in the preliminary stages.

Sirinek said full details will be shared probably next month or in November if the developers are successful with the land purchase.

Family fun center clears another hurdle

BY STAN MADDUX

The door has swung further open in La Porte for a large family fun center with features ranging from miniature golf, arcade and virtual sports games to a restaurant and bar.

The La Porte Board of Zoning Appeals on Tuesday, Sept. 9 ,approved a special exception for the 18-hole outdoor miniature golf course and arcade at the over 33,000 facility planned at New Porte Landing along Pine Lake Ave.

Everything else that would be offered at "Noah's Arcade" is already permitted under the city's zoning ordinance, which also allows for a Go Cart track that could be added to the development at some point, said Attorney Bill Nelson.

Nelson represents the developers Ben Konowitz and Ryan Hart, local residents who operate Full Tilt, a much smaller establishment offering pinball and arcade games on Fail Road on the city's east side since October of 2022.

Hart said great response from the community to Full Tilt was a driving force behind the plans for Noah's Arcade.

So was the desire to provide La Porte with what he strongly believes will be a regional destination and reason for local residents to stop going to other communities for similar offerings like Zao Island in Valparaiso, he said.

The plans also include 12 lanes of bowling, 100 arcade and pinball games along with a two lane Ninja Warrior course.

The unanimous vote by the board came after Nelson argued a family fun center at the 6.6 acre site behind Kroger conforms with the surrounding recreational land use.

He said there are things like Clear Lake, a baseball field at Fox Park, a bicycle and walking trail along with the Dunes Events Center in close proximity.

Nelson called the Dunes Events Center where regional volleyball tournaments drawing large crowds are often held on weekends "the epitome of recreation."

He also said Noah's Arcade would be a natural draw in between matches for families attending the tournaments.

In late July, the La Porte Redevelopment Commission approved an agreement for the proposed $10 million facility.

The agreement calls for the developers to be given the LPRC owned property as long as the fun center operates for at least four years and they provide what's promised in offerings, quality construction and building appearance.

Failure to live up to the terms of the agreement will mean Konowitz and Hart having to pay for the ground.

La Porte Economic Advancement Partnership Executive Director Bert Cook estimated the value of the ground at well over $1 million because of the residential and commercial developments that have gone up at the environmentally remediated former industrial area in recent years.

Cook also sees great potential in a Noah's Arcade making a positive difference in the amount of money coming in and leaving the city.

"I think it'll be a great addition. It's something unique that many other communities don't have," he said.

Hart said the hope is to begin construction late this year or early next year.

The fun center is planned at the former Dietrich Steel site demolished about a decade ago as part of the city's brownfield redevelopment.

In recent years, a 200 unit resort type living facility along with a medical office, Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Smoothie King and Aldi have also gone up at the 50 acre site.

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SCHOLASTICS

Positive test scores kick off the New Buffalo Area Schools' 2024-2025 year

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Even though it's only been a little over a week into a new school year, New Buffalo Area Schools Superintendent Adam Bowen already had some positive academic news to share at the Monday, Sept. 9, New Buffalo Area Schools Board of Education meeting.

With regards to MSTEP scores, when combining ELA and math scores for third through seventh grades, he said the district ranked first in the county and is at 76%, with the next runner-up at 65%.

"In every category in grades three through seven, we were ranked number one for both math and ELA – so that was phenomenal results that we just got towards the end of last week," Bowen said.

With regards to eighth grade PSAT scores for math and ELA, New Buffalo ranked first place overall in the county at 77.5%, with the runner-up at 65% proficiency. With regards to ELA, New Buffalo students were 95 percent proficient on the PSAT, which he said is "incredible," and math was at 78%.

With regards to SAT scores, last year's junior class ranked third overall in ELA and third in math.

"So we had some great scores that were coming out and we're continuing to move the needle, so congratulations to all staff members and students for all their hard work and dedication," Bowen said.

Board members approved relinquishing the 2024-2025 Title III and Section 41 funds.

Board members were informed that Bowen had approved the following hires: Adam Forker, middle school football coach and Karyn Mina Dillard-Gits, BASE (Bison Afterschool Enrichment) lead.

Bowen said that staff at BASE, which had started up last Wednesday, were enjoying the new space. The ribbon was recently cut on the elementary school's kitchen/cafeteria expansion project, which includes the BASE office at the front of the school and a dining room area next to it.

Board trustee Jennifer Summers thanked athletic director Matt Johnson and everyone else who had participated at the junior varsity volleyball invitational, which was held at New Buffalo Middle/High School Saturday, Sept. 7.

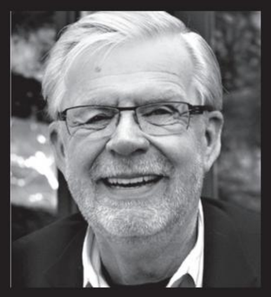
Board president Lisa Werner reminded everyone that the renewal of the district's operating millage will be on the ballot for the Nov. 5 General Presidential Election.

Board members approved the proposal being placed on the ballot at the June 27 meeting. The renewal will allow the school district to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18 mills on all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, required for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance and renews the current 19.5 mills that will expire with the 2025 tax levy.

SPORTS

From the Bleachers

COLUMN BY KURT MARGGRAF IN CHICAGO



For the friends and family that joined me to celebrate my birthday, and the 55th anniversary of Woodstock, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

That was Saturday, and when I woke up late morning on Sunday, I was in a great mood and prepared to watch the Bears beat the Tennessee Titans.

After breakfast (okay, really just a donut), I sat down to watch the pregame shows and I had an idea. I wondered if I could share my feelings and emotions live, as the game was being played. When the game started, I was so intrigued that I forgot my plan.

So instead of doing it live, I'll try to reenact how I felt during the opening game of the season that I fully expected the Bears to make the Playoffs.

The opening quarter was pretty uneventful. Both offenses struggled, but the Bears offense looked a little worse than the Titans. Eventually, the Titans scored and took the lead. On the ensuing kickoff, Velus Jones dropped the ball, then accidentally kicked it to the Titans.

Last year, I would have been furious, but this year I felt sorry for him. Anyway, the Titans scored a field goal, and suddenly, the momentum was all Tennessee's. They scored another touchdown to go ahead 17-0, but just before halftime, the Bears kicked a field goal.

The second half looked like the first half until about half-way through the third quarter, when the Bears blocked a punt and Jonathan Owens picked up the block, and ran it into the end zone.

The momentum that had been with the Titans the entire game, suddenly swung to the Bears. They moved the ball well enough to kick a couple of field goals to make the score 17-16.

The final quarter was half over and Tennessee was trying to regain the momentum, when their quarterback desperately threw an ill advised pass that Bears cornerback Tyrique Stevenson intercepted, and ran back for a touchdown that gave the Bears their first lead. They quickly scored a 2 point conversion to go up by 7. The Titans last gasp effort to tie or win the game fell short as the other Bears cornerback, Jaylon Johnson, intercepted a pass to ice the game.

The Bears division is expected to be very good this season. After the first week, the two favorites, Green Bay and Detroit, both lost while Minnesota and Chicago emerged victorious. Green Bay's quarterback was injured and is expected to miss 3-6 weeks.

I don't know if there is a favorite any more. Even though the Bears struggled offensively, their defense looked great and their rookie quarterback now has a game under his belt. This season looks like it will be even more exciting than expected.

Musician Holly Near said, "If you have the guts to keep making mistakes, your wisdom and intelligence leap forward with huge momentu.".

Be kind. Talk to you next week. Peace, love, and happiness.

Raiders tighten ship during break from Gridiron

BY STAN MADDUX

The Red Arrow Raiders were credited with a road victory from their scheduled opponent Friday, Sept. 6, cancelling their season.

Head Coach Matt Johnson said Tri-Unity Christian School at Wyoming didn't have enough players this year to field a varsity team.

"It was a little bit of a blessing in disguise for us," he said.

Johnson said the coaching staff used the week off from competition to work heavily on fundamentals and other weaknesses like physical conditioning exposed during the season opener against Mendon.

Mendon with more than a dozen prior state championships defeated the Raiders 60-0 at New Buffalo High School on Aug. 29.

Johnson said players who believed they were in good football shape tired early in that game, which negatively impacted their ability to consistently execute on the field.

"Hopefully, our kids feel more confident in their ability to perform because they're in better condition and they know what they're doing more effectively," he said.

Making things more challenging against Mendon was senior David Nicely, a strong lineman on offense and defense, leaving the game early with a strained tendon in his knee.

"He's a game changer for us on the line. We'll see how he progresses throughout the week," he said.

Johnson said Nicely could return for their next game at Grandeville Christian School Sept. 13.

The Raiders (1-1) were also without senior Vaughn Nikkel and sophomore Keith Forst, who are both out for the season with aches and pains that became progressively worse.

Each of them followed their doctors' recommendations not to compete to give their injuries time to heal.

"We don't think they were actually football related injuries but from other activities at some point over the past year or two," he said.

Johnson said the loss of Nikkel especially hurt on defense where he was expected to be the leader after a becoming a difference maker last season.

"He's a great tackler, very athletic kid for us," he said.

One reason the team isn't as sharp as the coaching staff wants them to be in terms of fundamentals and execution is players lacking varsity experience trying to make up for the loss of eight starters from last year's 5-4 squad to graduation.

Johnson said the coaching staff also spent the off-week making adjustments they feel will help the team better compete at their current level.

"I think the guys that are filling those roles will be good. They just need time to get experience. That's just where we're at," he said.

Never discourage anyone...who continually makes progress, no matter how slow.
— Plato

Upstart Lady Bison continue to impress

BY STAN MADDUX

The New Buffalo High School girls' volleyball team soundly defeated Grace Christian at home Wednesday, Sept. 11, after a near first place finish in a weekend tournament.

Head Coach Bruce Molineaux said he's pleased with how the team is performing despite the unexpected loss of two key starters from last year's squad.

Molineaux said the key, so far, has been a solid defense with all players in new positions except for Meagan Fatter.

Fatter had 19 digs in the three set victory against Grace Christian and 51 digs in the Saturday tournament at Allegan.

"That's what's keeping us in the games is our defense," he said.

Line drive and sometimes difficult to return hard hit serves have also been a strongpoint for the Lady Bison, who are 8-5-1 on the season.

A thunderous serve from Josie Humphrey that knocked the glasses off a Grace Christian player during the second set was an example of the quality of strikes this year from the serving position.

Humphrey and Riley Tertel each had four aces in that game on the serve.

Tertel finished the 25-4 second set victory with an ace.

An impressive hard strike of a returned ball from the back of the court by Benita Puskinigus was the deciding point in the 25-8 victory in the final set.

Not playing this year is senior Jane Funk, who badly injured a knee during a club volleyball game over the summer, and Colleen Chlystun.

Chlystun transferred to Burris Laboratory School in Muncie with an eye on playing volleyball at nearby Ball State University after graduating.

The Lady Bison were also without Puskinigus, a key figure especially at the net and on the serve, when they defeated some bigger schools on their way to a close second place finish in the tournament.

In the championship game, New Buffalo won the first set 25-19 against Dowagiac but the lost the next set 25-23.

The deciding third set ended 15-10.

"That's how close we were to winning the tournament," Molineaux said.

Humphrey and Cassidy Saunders led the Bison in kills during the tournament with 28 and 21 respectively.

Molineaux said another reason the team is progressing quicker than he expected is good communication with each other on the court.

"They're just working hard and they're talking to each other," he said.

Molineaux said the team has also done well in keeping mistakes while striking the ball to a minimum, which helps overcome a lack of height at the net from the losses of the much taller Funk and Chlystun.

"So far, so good. I'm pleased with them," he said.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR NEW BUFFALO TOWNSHIP 'FIRED UP 5K'

Runners and walkers can still register for the New Buffalo Township Fire Department's Fired Up 5K, which is scheduled for 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 28.

Participation helps provide township firefighters with equipment they need to better serve the community. Participants run or walk on the new non-motorized path along Red Arrow Highway and wind through Union Pier. Pre and post-race activities will be held in Timothy's Restaurant parking lot, which is located at 16409 Red Arrow Highway in Union Pier.

Now through Sept. 27 at 11:59 p.m., the late registration is $30. The same day registration fee is $35. Tee shirts are only guaranteed through Sept. 13. A limited amount of extra tee shirts will be available on a first come, first serve basis.

Early packet pickup will be from 6-8 p.m. Sept. 27 at New Buffalo Township Hall, 17425 Red Arrow Highway. Packet pickup on the day of the event will be from 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

Awards will be given to Overall Male and Female and in the following age categories: 14 and under, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60 and over.

Timing and scoring will be provided by MAC's Sports Timing, results will be posted during the event and online at www.macssportstiming.com.

To register, visit www.runsignup.com/race/mi/unionpier/newbuffalotownshipfire5k.

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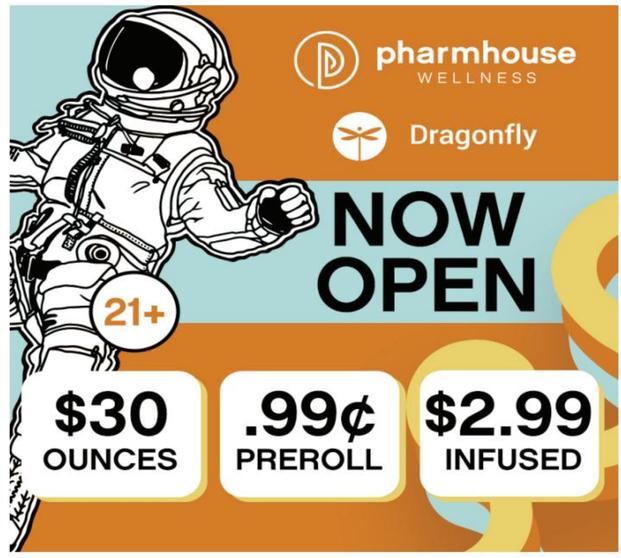

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River Raisin Ragtime Revue enters the southwest Michigan music scene

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Even though it's been regarded as a "forgotten era" in the musical landscape, River Raisin Ragtime Revue (R4) founder and executive director William Pemberton said that ragtime music is deeply embedded in much of today's modern tunes.

"It's the formative music of American popular music...All later rock and roll, the blues come out of that music and nobody anymore can name a ragtime composer," he said.

Pemberton hoped that ragtime music became forgotten no more during a R4's performance at The Acorn Center of the Performing Arts Friday, Sept. 6, as part of a fundraiser for the School of American Music (SAM) in Three Oaks.

In addition to performing for an audience that evening, thanks to a grant from the Upton Foundation, SAM arranged for students from River Valley Elementary School to attend a music workshop at The Acorn earlier in the day.

Based in Tecumseh, Michigan, which is situated on the River Raisin in southeast Michigan, the 22-year-old R4 hires musicians from throughout the state and region. Pemberton said they've had faculty from Central Michigan University and Detroit, as well as have worked with guest artists who've been Grammy and Pulitzer Prize winners and a John McArthur Fellow from Chicago.

"We've worked with thousands of different musicians and different projects," he said.

Last Friday's performance marked R4's first visit in this southwestern corner of the state.

The group was playing at a ragtime extravaganza, which was attended by SAM founder Garth Taylor, in Adrian last summer.

Pemberton said their performance convinced Taylor that R4's mission aligns perfectly with SAM's mission.

"We do America's original style of popular music - our mission is the performance and preservation of that music - and so what a perfect match for the School of American Music fundraiser," he said.

As part of the renovation of an historic, 1880s-era church, R4 will soon be joining an arts and science campus in Adrian. The campus is owned by PlaneWave Instruments, a telescope company that moved to Michigan from California, and features the Adrian Center for the Arts, Sam Beauford Woodworking Institute and PlaneWave manufacturing facilities on it.

"We are renovating the church on campus for our home for performances, our recordings and our archive," Pemberton said.

Students enjoy a performance by the River Raisin Ragtime Revue at The Acorn

Students enjoy a show by the River Raisin Ragtime Revue at The Acorn

The River Raisin Ragtime Revue puts on a show for students at The Acorn

Taylor said that, in addition to Scott Joplin songs being used as soundtracks in many commercials and movies, many of a certain age have grown up listening to ragtime music as part of the soundtrack of animated cartoons like Bugs Bunny.

"The soundtrack was all of this ragtime early jazz American music, so we grew up actually listening to Scott Joplin and Duke Ellington and some of these guys - it's in people's memory even if they don't articulate it ," he said.

After having such a great time at the community festival in Adrian, he decided to make it his mission to bring R4 to Berrien County.

"Their mission is about researching and performing American music and that's my mission also so, there ought to be a match if we can just figure out logistically how to do it," he said.

For the past 10 years, SAM has been doing programming in the area's elementary and middle schools. Garth said that there are plans to do three shows for the students at the all-grades River Valley school this school year.

Funds raised from that night's fundraiser went toward the general operations of SAM. Garth said that the music school doesn't make money from its lessons and pays its teachers wiith money that's charged for lessons.

The funds will also be put toward the school's continuing growth.

"We believe we will be able to successfully grow the enrollment by 10, 15 and 20 percent and we believe we will be able to expand our space by the same amount and that's all coming over the next two to three years," he said.

In order to accommodate this growth, Taylor said that the school will need to start paying administrative staff. Currently, the staff is composed of volunteers.

"It's time to become a little bit more institutionalized and that's a stage of growth in an organization also - so we're trying to go down that road over the next two to three years," he said.

Taylor said he would describe the lessons given by instructors being more like "tutorials:" Each one is one on one, between the grown-up instructor and the student, with the grown-up thinking solely about the student's needs.

"The students either just can't handle it and quit right a way - a few of them do - but most of the ones, if it catches, they just stay for years and years because they just keep growing and growing...Its customized totally to whatever is the next thing they need to be working with," he said.

Motorcyclist in lengthy high-speed chase allegedly impaired

BY STAN MADDUX

A man is accused of leading police on a high speed chase on a motorcycle in Michigan City while alcohol impaired with cocaine and an illegal handgun on his possession.

Tyrone Morris, 45, is charged in La Porte Superior Court 1 with Class A misdemeanor operating while intoxicated, possession of cocaine and possession of a firearm by a serious violent felon, both Level 4 felonies, and Level 6 felony resisting law enforcement.

According to court documents, a Michigan City Police officer tried pulling him over for not having a license plate on the 2001 Kawasaki he was driving early on Aug. 29 near Bolka Avenue.

However, police said Morris fled westbound to Earl Road then County Line Road reaching speeds of about 100 miles per hour before turning eastbound on U.S. 12.

The chase reached the north side of the city when Morris heading toward a police vehicle blocking the street fled on foot.

He tried out running officers between several houses and along a fence and sidewalk before captured by a K-9 dog in an alley in the 800 block of W. 7th Street.

Police said a bag of cocaine weighing nearly 10 grams along with a loaded .40 caliber handgun with an extended 22 round magazine were recovered from the path Morris took during the foot pursuit.

A much smaller amount of cocaine was allegedly found on his possession.

Morris, who had an odor of alcohol on his breath, refused to have his blood alcohol level tested, which automatically resulted in his arrest for OWI.

It was not legal for him to have a gun since a 2002 conviction for dealing in cocaine, police said.

According to court documents, the motorcycle was last registered in Michigan in 2021.

Morris could face anywhere from a two to 12 year sentence on each of the most serious felony counts.

He was still being held in the La Porte County Jail on $20,000 bond set during his initial court hearing on Tuesday.

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Prosecutor hosting preschool party under microscope

BY STAN MADDUX

An investigation is being conducted into a private party the La Porte County Prosecutor had for the preschool children of three members of his staff at his office in Michigan City during business hours.

La Porte County Prosecutor Sean Fagan is dismissing the claims.

When questioned during the Sept. 4 meeting of the La Porte County Commissioners, Fagan admitted using a county government credit card to purchase supplies for the party.

However, Fagan also said he made things right by reimbursing taxpayers as he intended to do from the beginning.

Fagan said he gave a money order he purchased with his own funds to the La Porte County Auditor's Office about a week after the Aug. 27 party.

"In the end, no public funds were used for this event," he said.

Fagan also said his staff continued to work during the party, which started at 2:30 p.m. and lasted for about one hour.

Commission President Connie Gramarossa said the cost of supplies for the party was about $260.

"Why didn't you pay with private funds to begin with," she said.

Fagan said the party was kind of a "spur of the moment decision" on his part to reward staff members with children entering preschool for their recent hard work on two murder cases and other serious crimes.

So, Fagan said he gave a staff member permission to use the card for standard office supplies needed at the time and pick up whatever was needed for the party.

He then found space in his office he felt would be appropriate for the gathering he also viewed as a morale booster for his workers.

"We try to have an office culture that is family friendly," he said.

Gramarossa said there's no place for any private party or function in a public facility whether it's during or after business hours due to the risk for liability if someone got hurt and the distraction posed to employees in their taxpayer funded positions.

She said further upsetting were things like balloons and cups left on the floor and tables for an extended period after the party was over.

Gramarossa said one reason for the investigation is to determine exactly what happened and whether any laws or county government policies were violated.

"That's something the legal team is going to have to look at," she said.

She said Fagan reimbursing county government for the cost does not soften her stance on the matter.

At the very at least, she said it's a bad example she doesn't want followed by other department heads because of the potential for fraud and extra work created to keep the financial records in order.

"Government can't function like that," she said.

She said the investigation began when a county employee complained about the party and "mess" left afterwards.

"We have to address all whistleblower instances," she said.

In September of 2023, Gramarossa was cleared of alleged wrongdoing for taking a county owned car after hours to Chicago without permission and having a fender bender type accident with it.

At the time, Gramarossa said she was in too much of a rush to take the extra time to drive home and get her personal vehicle after notified her son had just been admitted to a hospital.

She also was cleared of wrong doing for signing the name of Commissioner Joe Haney on a county government document.

A special prosecutor ruled she committed the acts but there was no intent on her part of breaking the law.

'RUN TO THE CENTER OF THE WORLD 5K' COMING NEXT MONTH

Registration is open for the 13th annual Run to the Center of the World 5K Run/Walk, which will be held Saturday, Oct. 19.

Registration is limited to 50, so participants are encouraged to register soon. As always, the route will be on the beautiful, paved rural roads surrounding New Troy.

All finishers will receive a carved wooden medal. A free grab-and-go breakfast will be provided to all participants and volunteers.

Those who register before Oct. 3 will also receive a free tee-shirt. Because Friends of New Troy is an advocate of the reduce, recycle and reuse philosophy, extra shirts will not be ordered.

The race starts and ends at the New Troy Community Center, 13372 California Road in New Troy. Proceeds will benefit the Community Center, which receives no government funding and is supported entirely through memberships, donations, grants and fundraising events. The event is hosted by Friends of New Troy, the nonprofit organization that owns and operates the Community Center.

For more information, a link to register online and a form that can be downloaded and printed are available at www.friendsofnewtroy.org/run-to-the-center-of-the-world. Registration forms may also be picked up at the Community Center. Entry fee is $25, or email runtothecenteroftheworld@gmail.com or call 269-426-3909.

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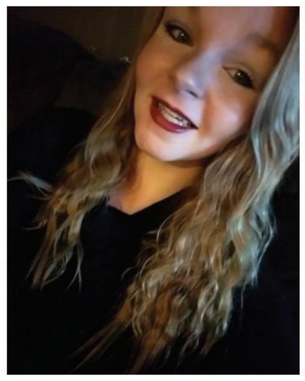


Brandy B. Hardaway, 29, of New Buffalo, passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, September 1, 2024.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Thursday, September 12 at 12PM at Swem Chapel, 301 W. Front Street., Buchanan. Friends may visit with the family from 10AM until the time of the service at the funeral home. Memorial contributions may be made to GoFundMe account to help continue to support Brandy's family, https://gofund.me/21ce7baa. Those wishing to leave an online condolence may do so at www.swemchapel.com.

Brandy was born on May 31, 1995, in Michigan City, IN to Lance & Linda (Harmon) Fellows. She graduated from New Buffalo High School. Brandy dedicated several years as a chef at Ghost Isle Brewery in New Buffalo.

Known for her free spirit; she truly lived her life to the fullest. She had a passion for poetry, singing karaoke and spending time at the beach or ocean. Brandy's most cherished moments were spent with her family, especially with her children as she was a proud and devout mother.

Brandy is survived by her parents, Lance & Linda Fellows; husband, Michael Hardaway; children, Liza Wilgus and Owen Hardaway; and sister, Danielle Fellows.

A Day in the Life
A DOG CALLED ROSCOE

BY LAWRENCE VON EBELER

It's not any grand revelation to recognize the value pets play in our lives.

My dog, Roscoe, is no exception.

He's a mixed breed (or a stray dog) and is, in my mind's eye, the cutest dog I have ever had (and I've had a lot of them). Before Roscoe, I had Lhasa Apsos - eight of them! I loved them all, even the aging ones that were blind and deaf. Roscoe is an adorable stray, who I picked up at the Humane Society. He is part dachshund and has the characteristic length of a dachshund breed, but he's not as long. He's black and tan, which makes him rough and tumble looking - a "he needs a grooming" look. He weighs about 12 pounds, and is as smart as they come. The Humane Society guessed he was five or six; however, after the young Dr. Sorenson extracted 10 teeth, he changed that to 11 years old.

Having had to wait for them to neuter the little guy (it's the law), I was more than a little anxious to pick him up and take him to his new home. Shortly after I got him home, I decided I had to paint one of my Adirondack chairs on the lawn in front of the house. Not wanting Roscoe to get anxious in my absence, I took him outside with me and started painting and scraping the chair. I had his 20 foot spring action leash; however, failed to hold onto it and Roscoe got away from me and crossed the street and was checking out my neighbor's property. I panicked and, with my bad leg, I couldn't chase after him. Furthermore, I could not even get out of the Adirondack chair I was stuck in! Since I did not have my first alert button nor phone, I could only sit and call 'Roscoe" over and over. I had to get some help to even get me out of the Adirondack chair! At that moment, the neighbor came down the street in his golf cart toward me. Summoning up my courage and chucking my pride, I shouted out to the man in the golf cart and waved madly for his attention. When he finally looked in my direction, I shouted: "I need help!" Fortunately, he stopped and came over to me. I explained that my dog had escaped from me and pointed to Roscoe, who was in my neighbor's yard just across the street, and he took off to capture him. Thank God, he got a hold of Roscoe and carried him back home! The nice man then helped me out of my chair, which I had tried and tried to get out of without any luck! Then he picked up the paint can, brushes and tools and helped me into the house with Roscoe.

It was very nice of that man to do so much for a total stranger and his runaway dog. It was my lucky day! Later, I wrote him a note of thanks and left it on his golf cart, which I could see in his carport. I hadn't even gotten his name!

Meanwhile, Roscoe had gotten paint all over him. After cutting out what I could, I realized he needed grooming. So he was off to the groomer, who also picked him up and delivered him back home but with his hair cut down to his skin! I was outraged. Shouldn't they call you if they're going to do something that radical? Now, I realized Roscoe needed the grooming done to keep his coat in control (and I think he appreciated it, too).

We both sleep in my king sized bed: me, with my head on the right side pillow and fluffing over the corner of his to elevate it, like the doctor advises; Roscoe, with his head on the other and with his back snuggled up to me. I pat him three times, which makes both of us fall asleep promptly.

I happen to love York Mint Patties and I buy two bags of them once a week. When they are gone, they are gone and I don't let myself buy any more. They vanish quite quickly because not only do I wolf them down, but Roscoe loves them, too. He has an uncanny sight, sound and smell for these chocolate mints! He can hear me opening the little Mylar packages (that make zero sound) and he comes promptly for his treat. I know dogs should not have chocolate but I only give him a fraction.

It's hard rationalizing some things, isn't it?

HOROSCOPE

SEPTEMBER 12-18, 2024

AS INTERPRETED BY SANDY "STAR" BENDT

ARIES MARCH 21—APRIL 19

You will feel like things are moving at rocket speed this week and many areas of your life will require attention. At work there is no sign of things slowing down and at home the chores will be piling up. Absent mindedness may be a problem so be sure to write things down.

TAURUS APRIL 20—MAY 20

There is a nice playful energy coming at you this week. Take advantage of it by going to discussions or presentations that coincide with your hobbies or quirky interests. Don't worry if your partner or friends don't want to tag along. Going alone opens the door to making new friends.

GEMINI MAY 21—JUNE 21

Feeling secure and stable will be very important this week. Anything that creates uncertainty or people who try to destabilize your world will be in for a surprise this week. You are looking for a deeper commitment now and won't tolerate halfhearted promises. All or nothing, baby.

CANCER JUNE 22—JULY 22

This is a great time to learn something new or start a research program. You will be very mentally active and will get a lot from reading, writing and interviewing historical figures. You will make interesting connections that others may miss or overlook.

LEO JULY 23—AUGUST 22

Your earning ability and value consciousness are on the rise this week. The important thing is to spend less and increase your savings during this boon. If you do have to spend money spend it on furnishings for the home. You will get any home or family issues worked out this week.

VIRGO AUGUST 23—SEPTEMBER 22

This week you will be especially strong willed and may need some extra space or time for your projects. Let the people around you know that you need freedom to do and say the things that inspire you right now. It's not that you want to be alone, you just don't want to be weighed down.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23—OCTOBER 22

You will feel like pulling back and focusing more on yourself than others this week. This may bother those close to you but if you take the time to touch base before you disappear you'll have less explaining to do later. Honor taking down time and recharging your batteries.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23—NOVEMBER 21

Your ability to organize events and find people will be sought after this week. Whether you are asked to organize a trip, prepare for a party or find an old friend your hounddog like skills will win you brownie points with others. You know how to pull people out of hiding.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22—DECEMBER 21

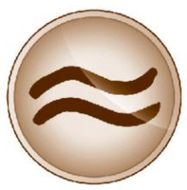
This is a great week to polish your image and increase your public influence. Opportunities to build up your goals will take shape now so be sure to formalize ideas, draft those important contracts and make those call backs. Don't shy away from hard work or smudge over details.

.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22—JANUARY 19

Your mind will be sharp and extra inquisitive this week. Engage in things that have a historical element or scholarly overtone to make the most of your curiosities. Perhaps a ghost tour or library presentation on a historical work will satisfy your intellectual urges.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20—FEBRUARY 18



Deal with any intense feelings you have. Do not disregard negative emotions or try to smooth things over for the sake of ending disagreements. Working things out may require some long conversations and saying things that make you uncomfortable, but you can do it.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19—MARCH 20

Dive into your relationships. You may have been shying away from getting close or sharing personal information but this week it's important you open up and let others get close to you. Your social life has the propensity to grow and blossom now. Don't hold that back any longer.

I mean, whatever kills you kills you, and your death is authentic no matter how you die. — *Jerry Garcia*

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Fill in the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9.

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7		8			5			
			1		7			
3		5	2				4	
		7	6					1
	1					2		7
2							5	
4	8			1	3			
			7	4		3		

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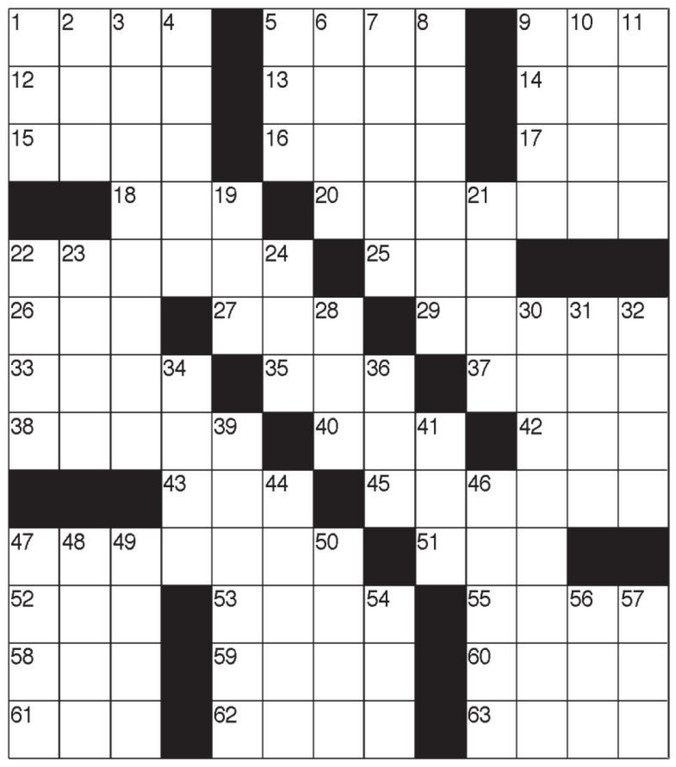
ACROSS

1 Examine
5 Soap-frame bar
9 Turf
12 Hatred (Ital.)
13 Egypt. cross
14 Guido's note (2 words)
15 Knee (Lat.)
16 Growl
17 Block
18 Size of coal
20 Pompano
22 Wealth
25 Drunk driving (abbr.)
26 Pointed (pref.)
27 Drop
29 Canadian island
33 Pasteboard
35 Public vehicle
37 Voucher
38 Buddhist Mongol
40 Luzon people
42 Haitian voodoo deity
43 Son of Ra
45 Overcoat
47 Calm
51 N.Z. woody vine
52 Atlantic (abbr.)
53 Buddhist monk
55 Opera heroine
58 Female ruff
59 Norse mythical hero
60 Trolley
61 Period
62 Rigid hair
63 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (abbr.)

DOWN

1 Clothe
2 Gelderland city
3 Easy job
4 Hard
5 Wilt
6 Sicilian resort
7 Norse poet
8 Cagey
9 Fat (pref.)
10 Viking
11 Defy
19 General equivalency diploma (abbr.)
21 City on the Danube
22 Sprint
23 Adjective-forming (suf.)
24 Pouch
28 Sheep's cry
30 Arouet
31 Sioux tribe
32 Close
34 It. actress
36 Heat unit
39 Gr. author
41 Axilla
44 Way
46 Ray
47 Berne's river
48 Wing (pref.)
49 Excuse
50 Discharge
54 Alabama (abbr.)
56 Burmese knife
57 Television channel



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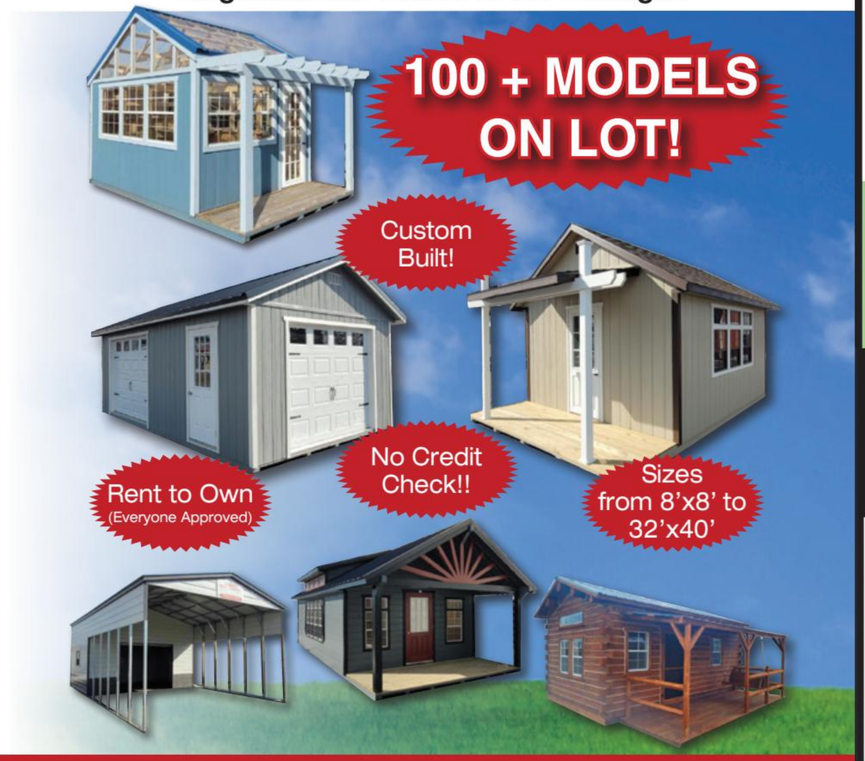

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Tourist Council launches 2024/2025 'Makers Trail Passport Challenge'

It's time to get wine corks popping, beer foaming and spirits stirring in Southwest Michigan. The 2024/2025 Southwest Michigan Makers Trail Passport Challenge is underway from Sept. 3, 2024, to April 30, 2025. Sponsored by the Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council, it encourages adults 21 years and older to visit over 40 wineries, breweries, cideries and distilleries and try their makers' crafts.

"It's a fun reason to get together with family and friends. The more makers you visit, the more favorite craft beverages you will find, the more access codes you can scan and the more rewards you can claim," said Marcy Simpson, executive director of the Tourist Council. "We keep the challenge simple, so it takes only visiting for two to three days to reach at least one prize level."

This year's rewards are:

Level 1: $15 Makers Trail Gift Certificate when you scan 10 different Makers Trail access codes.

Level 2: Custom-designed Makers Trail T-Shirt when you scan a total of 20 different Makers Trail access codes.

Level 3: Custom-designed Makers Trail Hoodie when you scan a total of 30 different Makers Trail access codes.

Bonus Reward: Makers Trail YETI stackable cup when you spend at least one night at a participating hotel and complete ANY rewards program level.

Grand Prize: All-Inclusive Layover Package — Two nights (double occupancy) in a participating hotel plus gift certificates redeemable at area restaurants, Makers Trail destinations and more. To enter the drawing, passport holders must complete all levels, including the bonus level, by April 30, 2025. The winner will be announced by May 30, 2025.

It is easy to start the Makers Trail Passport Challenge. Download the free Visit Southwest Michigan app from the App Store or Google Play. It puts everything at participants' fingertips, including this year's rules, a listing of makers, easy access code collecting and automatic tallying of rewards, including an entry in the Grand Prize drawing for qualifiers.

While this year's Passport is digital-only, a printed Makers Trail map is available at the Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council Information Center in Benton Harbor, participating makers' locations and hotels. Or download the map from the Makers Trail website, makerstrail.org.

"Every year, repeat Makers Trail Passport participants tell us they enjoy trying our newest craft beverages. The prizes are collector items, too," said Simpson. "Whether this is your first time to explore the trail or you've done the challenge for years, we look forward to raising a glass with you before April 30."

The Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council connects visitors and locals to activities in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties. View their curated events, blogs, itineraries, trail guides and more online. For more information, call 269-925-6301, or visit www.makerstrail.org/passport or www.facebook.com/makerstrail. — STAFF REPORTS

PET OF THE WEEK

YOKO

Yoko should love you, as she loves snuggles and cuddling. She is a mixed-breed that is just over a year old, spayed, about 43 pounds, and up-to-date with her vaccinations. Yoko is great around humans, and dog-selective, once she gets to meet them. She is a good judge of character, does not like cats, but is accepting of new learning. Yoko is trainable with treats, or just give her treats.

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New Buffalo Times
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7	3	8	9	2	5	4	1	6
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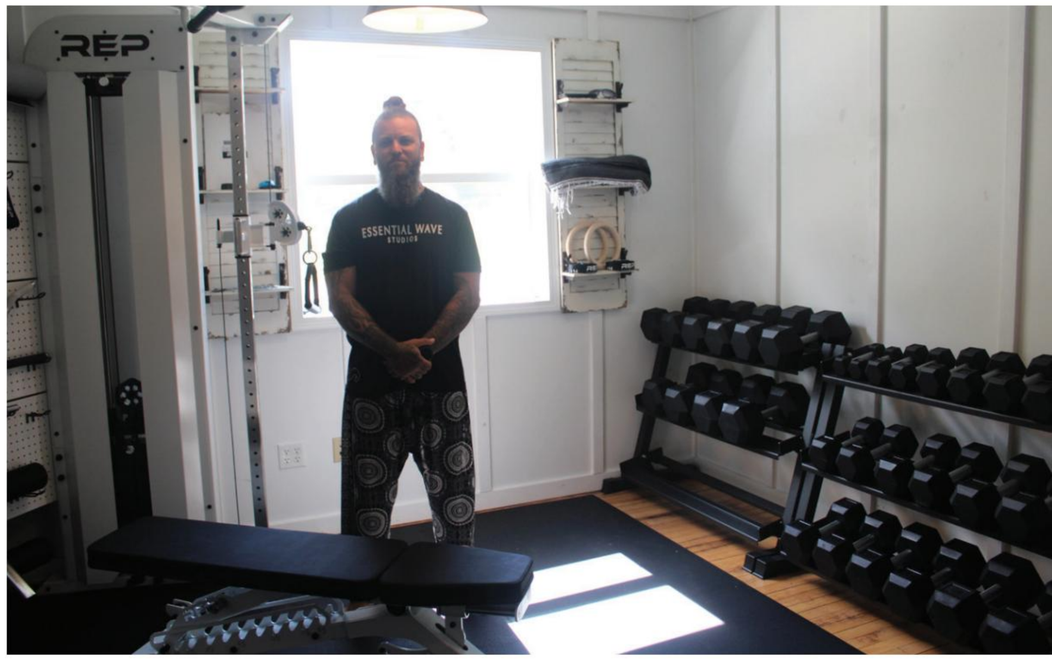
Renée Bowen in her upstairs space at Essential Wave Studios

Aron and Renée Bowen with Elisa Walsh in the front room at Essential Wave Studios

Aron Bowen in his downstairs space for resistance training at Essential Wave Studios



Essential Wave Studios invites you to ride the 'wave' of physical, emotional wellness

BY FRANCESCA SAGALA

Renée Bowen said that those who enter Essential Wave Studios in New Buffalo will encounter a "trifecta" of wellness offerings for their bodies and their minds.

"We all support each other but each can also stand alone and that's why we're so essential - it's essential to keep a yoga practice, it's essential to work with a bodyworker that really knows what's going on and can get to that root cause, it's essential to do a resistance training," she said.

Downstairs is her husband, Aron, whose resistance training invites people to come in for an assessment and workout exercises that are tailored to them individually. In the bright front room is where the all-level yoga sessions are led by Elisa Walsh, with Mat Pilates beginning by the end of October and, eventually, Reformer Pilates. When he's ready, Aron hopes to add some HIIT classes.

Upstairs, there will eventually be a recovery room, with an infrared sauna. As a certified dry needle therapist, Renée will also offer neck traction dry needling appointments. As a Reiki master, Walsh said that she'll be offering vibroacoustic therapy on a vibrating table.

"We're going to layer that with a grounding BioMat - so it kind of gives you a little heat and warmth, too - and then do energy work with Reiki on top of that," she said.

Renée, who obtained her Bachelor of Science in human physiology from the University of Oregon before receiving her Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) from Pacifica University, does her work in the corner room.

She said she's a physical therapist who can do "hands on manipulation of the joints," which is different from chiropractic.

"It's not joint adjustment - it comes more from a doctor of osteopathic medicine, where physical therapists are taught that manipulative technique, but my approach is very biomechanical," she said.

Renée is only 5% of orthopedic physical therapists that have earned a Manual Therapy Fellowship in the United States and has pursued a specific interest in Manual therapy and women's health.

Wherever they may be on their wellness journey, Renée said that those who visit Essential Wave will find that it's a "three-legged stool."

"We refer to ourselves a lot like bringing this 'wave' of health and investing in your health and making sure we're all taking the time to include that wellness as a part of your life because if we don't, we pay for it later," she said.

An electrician for 26 years as well as motor mechanic, Aron had owned a small retail shop in Colorado, where he and Renée had been living at the time. Meanwhile, Renée had opened a private practice there.

When Covid forced the closure of those businesses, they moved to New Buffalo.

Having spent summers in New Buffalo and Union Pier with his family, who've lived there for decades, Aron was no stranger to the area. His grandfather had his own business, Bowen's Decorating Service, that started here in the 1950s.

"We came out to visit and said, 'Maybe we should trade the mountains for water,'" he said.

For two years, they took over a yoga studio in Chesterton. While teaching the anatomy portion of a yoga teaching training course at Dancing Feet Studio in New Buffalo, Walsh, who hails from Beverely Shores, Indiana, met Renée.

While they've all met in the middle now, the paths of Aron, Renée and Walsh were vastly different with regards to how they ended up promoting wellness to the community.

Inspired by the work of Renée, whose he been married to for 13 years, Aron, who had been doing maintenance work around the studio, decided to pursue his NASM certification.

A former first grade teacher and lifelong yogini, Walsh decided to return to yoga after her son was born. She got her 200 hours of certification from Dancing Feet and just completed an additional 300-hour certification in Kundalini yoga. In addition to becoming a Reiki master teacher, she's also a sound and vibration therapist and meditation teacher.

Having been under the tutelage of "incredible" dance teachers in her youth in Santa Fe, New Mexico, Renée was encouraged to apply to dance colleges. She attended Marymount Manhattan College, where she spent about 60 hours a week dancing. After partially tearing her Achilles tendon and dislocating her shoulder during a rehearsal, Renée was forced to take a three-month break.

Laying on the table at a physical therapy clinic, Renée stared at the anatomy charts on the wall.

"I was thinking to myself, 'I've been hurting for 18 whole years of my life already dancing like this' - I mean, I had back issues, I had all sorts of stuff - and I was like, 'This might be a really cool career,'" Renée said.

Appointments with Renée can be scheduled by calling her number, which is available at www.ewstudios.com, as well as by messaging Essential Wave Studios on Facebook.

Currently, yoga classes are offered at the studio (or outdoors weather permitting), which is located at 45 South Whittaker Street in New Buffalo, at 10 a.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

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